

**DR DALE HOLMES**

***Diagonal Diagram of Dispersed Documents***

Research period began February 2017

Exhibition Dates 12t/10/17 – 28/10/17

Following the success of my exhibition, ***Abandoned Temporary Crisis Facility*** at Beaconsfield Gallery, Vauxhall <http://beaconsfield.ltd.uk/projects/provisional-conditions/> in 2016 and the accompanying symposium ***Heritage, Immigration and Temporary Fabrications: Abandoned Facilities & Housing Immigration***. I began developing some of the main themes which had become important to the research and the ways in which these were driving the artistic practice. These include the spatial practice coming out of the architectural and sculptural methods I have been investigating through the artistic practice, and the role of research documents and ephemera to the research process. This led to a discussion with a range of practitioners from a range of disciplines around the possibility of a presentation of research materials in an art gallery context. The contributors at this early stage of the process were:

Dr Jaspar Joseph-Lester <https://www.rca.ac.uk/more/staff/jaspar-joseph-lester/>,

Dr Rachel Garfield <https://www.reading.ac.uk/art/about/staff/r-garfield.aspx>,

Dr Jonathon Darling

<https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/jonathan.darling.html>

And Anne Tallentire <http://www.annetallentire.info>.

I agreed to develop the project towards an exhibition at ***ArtLacuna*** – <http://artlacuna.org>. ArtLacuna is an internationally recognised gallery and projects space in Battersea, London that is dedicated to providing space to artists and academics who need to develop their research in a public facing context, the audience at ArtLacuna is traditionally artists and academics, but is also recognised destination for general art audiences. The management at ArtLacuna offered the space and invigilation for the duration of the show for free, the material costs for the structure and the exhibition press was funded through a successful QR bid through the University of Huddersfield. *Diagonal Diagram of Dispersed Documents* is the latest iteration of the larger research project *Material Conjectures* begun in 2011.

The project develops further an ongoing interest in the problematics of artistic research and how this is staged and represented beyond the academic framework and particularly in an art context through the construction of a materially driven spatial practice methodology. This is a question that has been a major focus of my research since completion of my AHRC funded PhD – ***Abstract Realism: Non-Anthropocentric Strategies for Constructing Non-Relational Art-Works*** <http://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.606563> - in 2013. The research led to the development of ***Material Conjectures*** which has led to a number of substantial outputs over the past six years.

The work develops material responses to, as well as ideas and critiques of neo-liberal urban planning, government policy, mass migrations, globalised economies and temporary structures. Henri Lefevre's notion of 'the right to the city' and the

development of this by David Harvey <https://newleftreview.org/II/53/david-harvey-the-right-to-the-city> , Mark Fishers concept of 'Capitalist Realism' <http://www.zero-books.net/books/capitalist-realism> and Keller Easterlings work in 'Extrastatecraft' <https://www.versobooks.com/books/2163-extrastatecraft> all feed directly into the ideas that are being addressed in *Diagonal Diagram of Dispersed Documents*.

The process of developing the project towards exhibition began through growing conversations and correspondence with a selected group of artists and academics who I identified as working in a related area to literature/context I was intervening upon. Discussions with human geographers and urbanists led to the development of the structure in its physical and spatial realisation as well as decisions around the placement/staging of the research materials upon and inside the structure. The method for building the temporary architecture/ exhibition structure was drawn both from methods previously explored by Material Conjectures and newly developed through the idiosyncracies of the site/gallery space. Structural sheet materials – OSB, Plywood, Corrugated PVC and Bitumin – large scale prints on silk were attached to a wooden structure – made using studwork at a length of 2440mm long – that intersected the gallery space creating a new spatial experience for the gallery audience. All the materials were unchanged, leading the structure to appear in keeping with their industrially produced dimensions.

*Diagonal Diagram of Dispersed Documents* offers a new and original material and spatial experience and platform for encountering academic and artistic research focused upon globalised economics and migrations, bringing together geographers, artists, film makers and writers, providing a framework to understand how research materials are staged and accounted for in process as opposed to the production of located outputs.

## Research links

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right\\_to\\_the\\_city](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_to_the_city)

<https://newleftreview.org/II/53/david-harvey-the-right-to-the-city>

<http://www.zero-books.net/books/capitalist-realism>

<https://archpaper.com/tag/refugee-housing/>

<https://archpaper.com/2016/11/moma-insecurities-exhibit-review/#gallery-0-slide-0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kltVGARh7xM&feature=youtu.be>

<http://refugeerpublic.submarinechannel.com>

<https://archpaper.com/2016/11/gsapp-the-other-architect/#gallery-0-slide-0>

## Glossary of terms

Diagonal:

1. joining two vertices of a rectilinear figure that are nonadjacent or two vertices of a polyhedral figure that are not in the same face... passing through two nonadjacent edges of a polyhedron *a diagonal plane*
2. inclined obliquely from a reference line (such as the vertical) *wood with a diagonal grain*, having diagonal markings or parts *a diagonal weave*

Diagram:

1. a graphic design that explains rather than represents; *especially*: a drawing that shows arrangement and relations (as of parts)
2. a line drawing made for mathematical or scientific purposes

Dispersive:

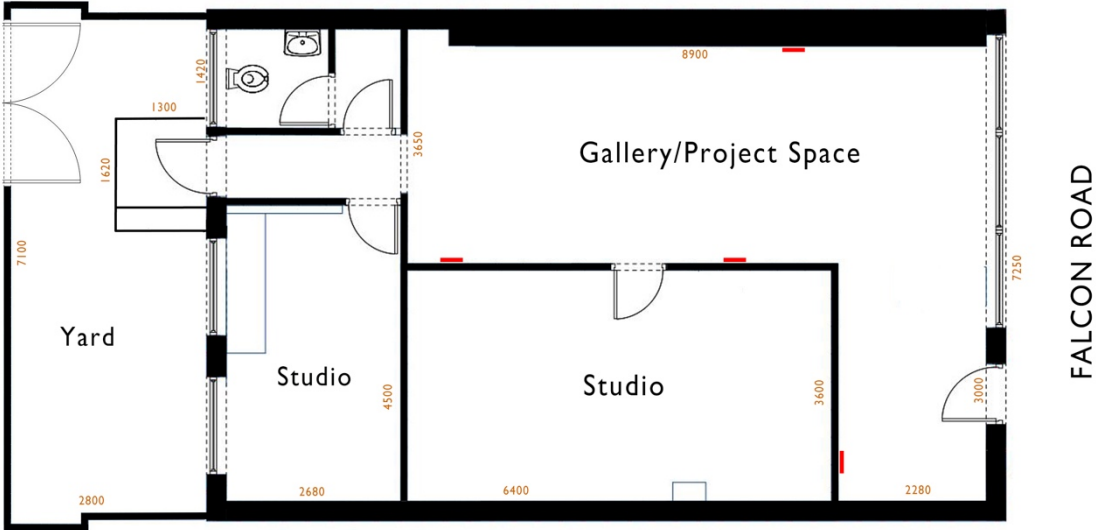
1. of or relating to dispersion *a dispersive medium the dispersive power of a lens*
2. tending to disperse

*'These dispersive trends are clear in Southern California, where net migration out of Los Angeles County runs about four times the rate of neighboring, more suburban Orange County, as migration to places like Riverside County mounts.'*

## Documents:

1. **a** *archaic* : proof, evidence **b** : an original or official paper relied on as the basis, proof, or support of something **c**: something (such as a photograph or a recording) that serves as evidence or proof
2. **a**: writing conveying information *financial documents historical documents a classified document that was leaked to the media* **b**: a material substance (such as a coin or stone) having on it a representation of thoughts by means of some conventional mark or symbol **c**: documentary
3. a computer file containing information input by a computer user and usually created with an application (such as a spreadsheet or word processor) *create a new document*

Gallery Plan



KEY:  
— power socket



## Press Release



### **Material Conjectures present *Diagonal Diagram of Dispersed Documents***

Private View: 7pm – 9pm Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Closing Event: 7.30pm – 9.30pm Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2017

ArtLacuna is open 12:00 – 17:00 on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 13/10/17 – 28/10/17

**Jonathan Darling | Rachel Garfield | Jaspar Joseph-Lester |  
Pil & Galia Kollektiv | Graham Lister | Maggie Roberts / Orphan Drift |  
Anne Tallentire | BAW and Bruce Gilbert |**

#### **Dispersed lives: the fragmentation of asylum support in Britain**

The ongoing refugee crisis across Europe has dominated political and public debate over the last year. Whilst Europe has been discussing responsibilities for refugees at an international scale, the UK has faced its own questions over responsibility for asylum seekers at local levels. From the quality of housing provided, to the divisive use of red doors and wristbands to identify asylum seekers and their properties, a range of problems have been publically highlighted within the UK's approach to housing asylum seekers.

Since 2000, the UK has run a policy of 'dispersal' through which asylum seekers are relocated across the country to temporary accommodation whilst awaiting decisions on their claims to refugee status. For the last three years, I've been researching this process. This research explores in detail the UK's provision of asylum accommodation since it was privatised in March 2012.

Privatisation in this sector was intended to both cut costs and to simplify the task of managing dispersal. Yet, the reality has been that the contracts provided do not offer space for rising asylum applications, and the removal of local authorities from this process has led to a less cohesive system of support.

My research found a support system that is fragmented, under-resourced, and often reliant on poor-quality accommodation in areas of existing social deprivation. With local authorities facing unprecedented financial pressure, asylum support services have rapidly diminished, leaving only charitable provision in many parts of the UK. Local authorities that were housing providers, also now complain of a lack of communication with private accommodation providers and the Home Office. Reflecting wider fears that the wellbeing of all involved in dispersal – asylum seekers and the communities they are dispersed to – are being ignored in favour of providing cheap housing and minimal services.

Contracts with private providers also mean that the process of accommodation is managed through an economic lens of efficiency and profitability, rather than one of vulnerabilities and needs. In this context, it is worryingly easy to see asylum seekers as 'burdens' to be distributed. This ignores both the skills that asylum seekers may bring to dispersal regions and the life stories and aspirations of those seeking refuge.

What recent events in the UK point to, is the need for stronger communication between actors involved in dispersal, longer-term planning of dispersal support services and integration opportunities, and a real need for political leadership in refuting the idea of asylum seekers as 'burdens' to be transferred between authorities, regions, and countries.

**Jonathan Darling** @Jonny\_Darling

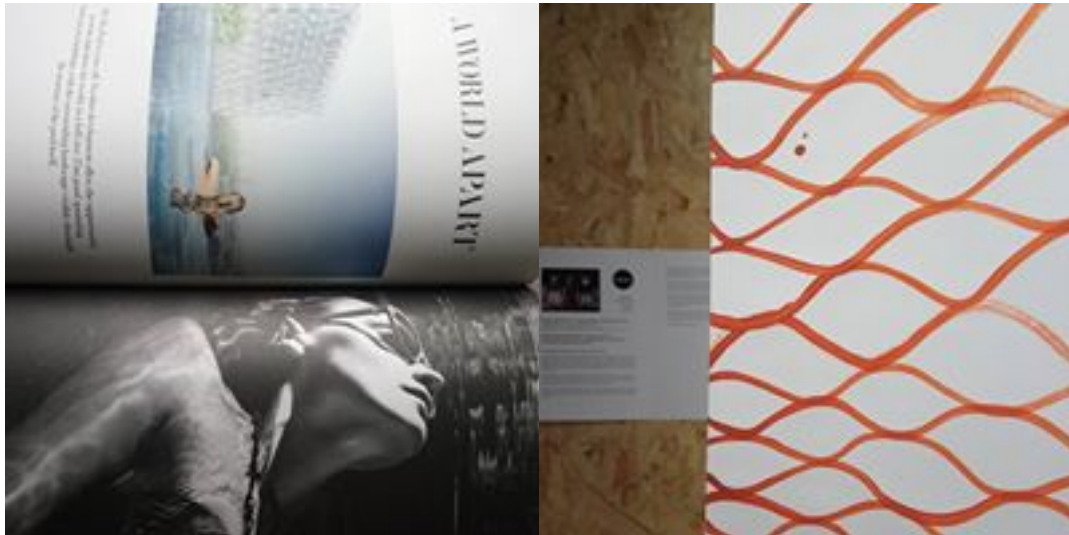


Images of *Diagonal Diagram of Dispersed Documents*



Installation shot





structure and details left: Jaspar Joseph-Lester Right: Graham Lister



Top: Jaspar Joseph-Lester. Bottom: Rachel Garfield



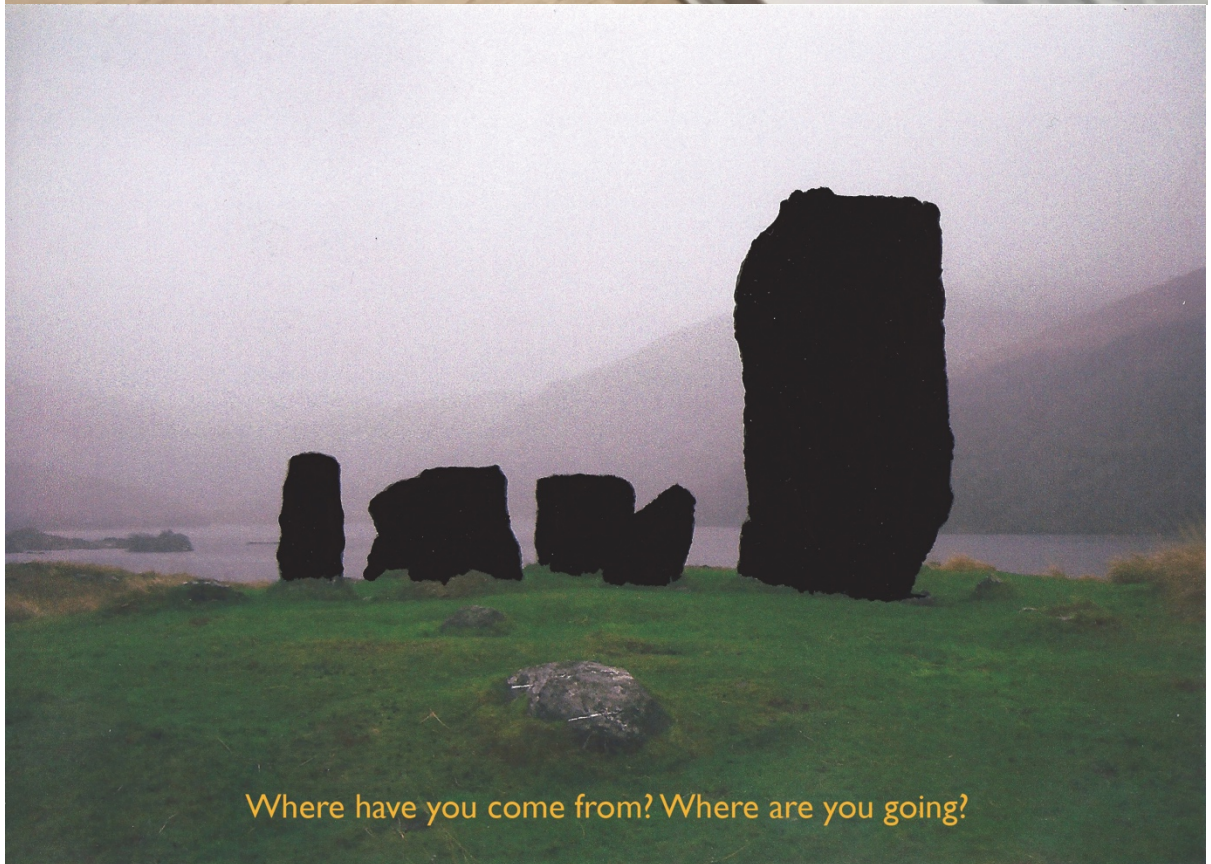


Top: Anne Tallentire. Bottom left: Dale Holmes. Bottom right: Structure



Assorted install shots.





Top: Anne Tallentire. Bottom: BAW and Bruce Gilbert